
The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Mobile Education Team Visits Bahrain

**By
Lieutenant Commander Ed McFarland, USN
Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management**

On June 11, 2003, the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM) completed its fifth mobile education team (MET) for fiscal year 2003 and was conducted in the Kingdom of Bahrain for the Bahrain Defense Force (BDF). The DISAM team consisted of Lieutenant Colonel Andrew White (Team Chief), Charlie Collins, John Clelan, John Smilek, and Lieutenant Commander Ed McFarland. Additionally, the team received Training and Logistics assistance from Major Tim Jones and CWO3 John Tims of the U.S. Embassy's Office of Military Cooperation (OMC) team. The DISAM team conducted a Foreign Purchaser's Course, a Foreign Purchaser's Executive Course and an International Training Course between May 31, 2003 and June 11, 2003 with over sixty students in attendance from the Bahrain Defense Force Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force, and National Guard.



**Brigadier Yousif
Abdullah Bahzad,
Director of the Bahrain
Defense Force Training
Directorate, making
opening remarks to the
SAM-F students.**

The Kingdom of Bahrain is an archipelago in the Persian Gulf, east of Saudi Arabia and is governed by the Al-Khalif family in consultation with a council of ministers. Bahrain is about 3.5 times the size of Washington, D.C., but despite its size the Kingdom of Bahrain has made an invaluable contribution to U.S. security objectives in the Arabian Gulf region by hosting and providing support to the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command. For its contributions in supporting U.S. security and cooperative efforts in the Arabian Gulf region, Bahrain has received major non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization Ally status.

**U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain, the
Honorable Ronald E. Neumann
(second from left), pictured with the
DISAM mobile education team.**



Brigadier Yousif Abdullah Bahzad, Director of the Bahrain Defense Force Training Directorate, and Colonel David Morte, Chief of the U.S. OMC in Bahrain, opened the courses with speeches on the importance of security cooperation with the United States; and challenged each student to gain and apply this knowledge in the execution of U.S. security cooperation

programs. During all three DISAM courses there was great interaction and dialogue on current and future security cooperation issues and initiatives. An obvious benefit of this training was that representatives from different element of the Bahrain Defense Force were able to communicate with each other on problems and solutions for internal processes. Additionally, Major Jones and CWO3 Tims were able to highlight current Bahrain Defense Force logistics and training issues which initiated corrective actions to improve the Bahrain Defense Force's foreign military sales logistic support and International Military Education and Training (IMET) program.



SAM-F students collaborating in workgroups during a practical exercise.

Major Saleh of the Sheikh Isa Military College assists Lieutenant Colonel White in preparation for the Foreign Purchaser's course graduation.



Lieutenant Colonel White congratulates Ali Khalifa Al Khalifa of the BDF Directorate of Maintenance and Logistics.

Members of the DISAM team did have an opportunity to visit Bahraini national and historical points of interest. Some of the team's highlights included a visit Bahrain's Tree of Life. The tree is the centerpiece of the "Bahrain was the Garden of Eden" theory and is famous because it somehow survives in the barren desert. Another highlight was a visit to Bahrain's Grand Mosque, which is the Kingdom's largest and capable of holding 7000 worshippers. The team also had an opportunity to visit the first oil well in Bahrain (the first country on the Arab side of the Gulf to strike black gold).



Bahrain's Al-Fatih Mosque, also known as the Grand Mosque.

Overall, the Bahrain MET was a highly successful training visit. In addition to the academic benefit to the Bahrain Defense Force, it was a great cultural experience for the DISAM Team. The Bahrain country team was extremely hospitable and even invited the DISAM Team to an OMC social which gave us an opportunity to have a few words with United States Honorable Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann. Our success on this MET would not have been the same without the superb support from the OMC staff.

About the Author

Lieutenant Commander Ed McFarland, USN is an Instructor of Security Assistance Management at the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management. He was commissioned as a Navy Supply Corps Officer upon graduation from The Citadel in 1993 and holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix.